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Moscow Conceptualism in the 1980s: Interview with Sabine Hänsen (Zurich)



Written by Olga Martin (Zürich)

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Currently based in Zurich, Sabine Hänsen is a researcher, curator, historian, and theoretician of Russian art. Since the 1980s she has been a member of the Moscow art group Collective Actions. In 1998, together with Georg Witte, she curated the exhibition Präprintium. Moscow Samizdat Books, which was devoted to underground publications in the former Soviet Union. (Sascha Wonders, Günter Hirt, Präprintium. *Moskauer Bücher aus dem Samizdat. Mit Multimedia CD* (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 1998); Forschungsstelle Osteuropa (ed.), *Samizdat. Alternative Kultur in Zentral- und Osteuropa: Die 60er bis 80er Jahre* (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 2000); Hans D. Christ, Iris Dressler (Hg.): *Subversive Praktiken. Kunst unter Bedingungen politischer Repression 60er-80er / Südamerika / Europa* (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz 2010), pp. 291-334.) Hänsen has co-curated Samizdat. Counterculture in Central and Eastern Europe (Academy of Arts in Berlin, 2000) and Subversive Practices. Art under Conditions of Political Repression, 60s-80s (Württembergischer Kunstverein Stuttgart, 2009). She has also been instrumental in establishing an audiovisual archive of Moscow Conceptualism that has been displayed in various exhibitions. Her exhibition PRIGOV. The Text Works of Dmitry Aleksandrovich is currently being shown in various places across Europe. Hänsen is also active as a translator and editor. She has translated into German poetry by prominent contemporary Russian poets such as Vsevolod Nekrasov, Dmitry Prigov, Lev Rubinstein, and others.



Olga Martin: In 1984, when nobody could imagine the end of the Soviet Union, you clandestinely made the video documentation *Moscow Moscow* about Russian underground art and literature, and smuggled it to the West. This was probably very exciting for you, but didn't you take a great personal risk?

Sabine Hänsen: Certainly, from the Soviet point of view this was a forbidden recording. I could have been expelled from USSR and denied re-entry. Already at the beginning of the 1980s, when I was studying in Moscow for the first time, I felt that the artistic underground was threatened by censorship and repression. Therefore I thought it would be important to document the life of this milieu. I had gotten to know many artists from the conceptualist circle, and when I came back to Moscow for my second stay in 1984, I decided to start a video documentation about artistic communication outside of the official institutions of Soviet culture. From my point of view, video is an excellent medium for archiving situations that are usually excluded from official memory.

OM: How did you get hold of a camera? At that time a private video camera was a rarity, especially in the Soviet Union.

SH: For my second stay in Moscow I had brought a Blaupunkt VHS camera with me. Therefore, when we came to

the Belorussian border in Brest, I was the only one who had to leave the train; I had to explain and justify myself. As I had a grant for studying at the State Film Institute in Moscow (VGIK) and could prove this by showing my documents, I was able to take the camera with me.

OM: What exactly was it that fascinated you about Moscow Conceptualism? You are from a quite different cultural tradition. Nevertheless you responded to this art with an astonishing openness.

SH: Actually for me this kind of poetry, performance and visual art was nothing exotic, since I could link it to my own experience. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, concrete and visual poetry attracted quite a lot of attention in Western Germany. In Bielefeld, there was the Colloquium of New Poetry where poets from various countries performed their texts. Soviet poets, however, were missing there since they were not allowed to leave their country. Only Valery Sherstjanoi could join the group in Bielefeld, because he had emigrated to the GDR. Also, I was very much interested in Fluxus and John Cage to whom I had listened on a radio program called *WDR Studio Acoustic Art*. I was not bent on finding something "other" in Soviet unofficial art, but rather to discover what I refer to as the "similar within the dissimilar."

OM: What do you mean by this?

SH: In the postwar era, the problem of how to work through the experience of totalitarianism was of great importance. Poets and artists focused on how to free their language, which had been usurped by the political system, from ideology. They attempted this for instance by reducing language to its materiality, to letters and sounds. Thereby they tried to understand to which degree they themselves had unconsciously internalized ideology. This implied a process of reflecting on the poets' own involvement in totalitarian language. Especially if we compare German and Russian culture, it was revealing to me to see how poets and artists reflected on their own past by aesthetic means.

OM: Is that why you chose to study Slavic Literatures during the Cold War?

SH: I think that for me, as for many other students of Russian culture of my generation, a political and existential motivation was decisive for the choice to take up this subject. My father fought for the Germans in Russia during the war, his brother died during the siege of Stalingrad, and my mother fled as a child on one of the last refugee ships to leave the Prussian province of Pomerania. I inherited this traumatic experience from my parents. I was born in Düsseldorf, and my childhood and youth were marked by a strongly Western orientation: I took part in a student exchange with Britain and France, and our holidays were spent in the Netherlands. But the trauma experienced by members of my family, and the equally traumatic relationship between Russia and Germany, continued to have an effect on me. Studying Russian was a possibility for me to confront these issues.

OM: How did your parents react when you told them that you wanted to study Russian?

SH: (laughs) Of course, this was a kind of a provocation.... Both had an ambivalent attitude to my studies: On the one hand, they didn't want to know any details, on the other hand they remained somehow interested in what I was doing.

OM: And how did you deal with everyday repression in Soviet life?

SH: At that time in the Soviet Union we were confronted with a schizophrenic situation that I had not experienced before: on the one hand, there was the official state culture, and on the other, the unofficial art scene. In the social circles in which I moved, I could clearly feel this. With my mentors at the university—that is to say, in a state institution—I communicated in the language used in the official Soviet context. I suppose that my professors also felt that we used many empty words and phrases. The communication with my friends in the unofficial scene, on the other hand, was quite different. So there was a kind of doublespeak, and this was typical of the situation at the time.

OM: Did you as a student feel under state control?

SH: It was a situation where nothing could be published without censorship. Particularly the media of technical reproduction, such as cameras, were under strict control—there was a policeman next to every photocopier. Access to a video camera for private use was never granted.



OM: For us today, this is hard to imagine. Speaking of the police, which in the former Soviet Union was called "militia"—, a militiaman is also the ambivalent hero in several poems and performances by Russian artist Dmitry Prigov. You were able to record Prigov, one of the most important representatives of Moscow Conceptualism, when he read his famous *Militiaman* cycle of poems. How did you get into contact with this underground artist?

SH: Since unofficial culture was a hermetic circle, you only needed to know one person in order to be recommended to the others. I was introduced by a fellow student from Paris who also acted as messenger for the art journal *A-Ya*. In this journal, works of Soviet underground artists were published, often for the first time, and introduced to a broader public in places like Paris or New York. My friend took the journal to Moscow and, conversely, sent artists' materials to Paris. After the first meeting I was regularly invited to exhibitions in artists' flats or studios, as well as discussions, performances, and poetry readings. All this information was passed on by word of mouth. At one of these events it was Prigov's turn. He read out for his friends what he had recently written. Prigov was very communicative and spontaneously invited us to his house in Belyaev, his poetic and artistic laboratory. It even turned out that we were neighbors. The Pushkin Institute, where I was studying Russian at the time, and Prigov's legendary flat were both on Volgin Street, five to ten minutes away from each other. In the Soviet Union, the official and the nonofficial, underground sphere were close to each other. So as a result we met quite often.

OM: Did Prigov already at that time differ from other representatives of Moscow Conceptualism?

SH: Prigov primarily attracted attention because he was extremely active. Not only did he produce his poems

according to a plan, but also his performances. Furthermore, he was well known in the underground circles because very early on he had created his own image. In his apartment he read to us from the *Militiaman* cycle. It was a provocative and disturbing act of self-stylization when this underground poet slipped into the role of guardian of state order.

From the cycle "**Apotheosis of the militiaman**" 1978 (Dmitri Aleksandrovič Prigov. Ed. Brigitte Obermayr, *Wiener Slawistischer Almanach* vol. 4 (2003), p. 43.)

When the Poleeceman stands here at his post
The whole expanse till Vnukovo unfolds before him
The Poleeceman gazes to the West and to the East
And emptiness unfolds beyond them
And the center, where the Poleeceman stands –
A view of it unfolds from everywhere
From everywhere the Poleeceman can be seen
From the East the Poleeceman can be seen
And from the South the Poleeceman can be seen
And from the sea the Poleeceman can be seen
And from the sky the Poleeceman can be seen
And from beneath the earth...

It's not like he tries to hide. (In this English translation the word "poleeceman" represents an effort to render Prigov's own defamiliarization of the Russian word *militsioner* (a policeman in the Soviet period) as *milicaner*. Dmitri A. Prigov: *Graždane! Ne zabyvaetes', požalyusta! / Citizens! Please take care of yourselves! Raboty na bumage, installjacija, kniga, performans, opera i deklamacija / Works on paper, installation, books, readings, performance, and opera, Moskovskij muzej sovremennogo iskusstva / Moscow Museum of Modern Art 2008. Translated by Thomas Campbell.*)

OM: But Prigov's appearances were limited to these clandestine spaces and could only be lived at the margins.

SH: Yes, Prigov was not allowed to perform in public at that time, because his conceptual and soc-artistic aesthetics didn't correspond to the official norms of Soviet culture. His aesthetics developed beyond the limits of official space. (In the early 1970s, so-called Soc-Art became a counterpart to official Soviet aesthetics. Soc artists cited the forms and content of official Soviet culture and deconstructed them in a way similar to Pop artists in the West.) The private homes of artists played an important role in underground cultural production at the time, as did artist studios and the natural spaces around Moscow.

OM: Who else among the Moscow conceptualists impressed you?

SH: There were very many different personalities who all belonged to this school. The counter figure to Prigov was Vsevolod Nekrasov. He also impressed me very much: A minimalist poet who discovered everyday communication for poetry and who read his poetry in a low, reserved voice with pauses, sometimes even falling into silence. That was a strong contrast to the loud, bathos-filled official speeches and the language of political slogans. Another important meeting place was Ilya Kabakov's studio. Here, poetry readings took place, or musical concerts by Vladimir Tarasov and others. And Kabakov himself regularly presented and commented on his own works.

OM: What were the discussions like during these meetings?

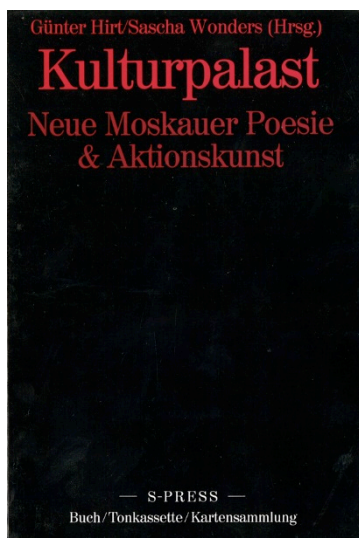
SH: The focus lay on the interaction between text and commentary, which generally plays an important role in conceptualism. Artists and poets commented on their own work, for instance Prigov in his characteristic preliminary notes or in his commentaries following the readings. This was quite an inspiration for others to also

offer their comments. There was a continuous process of commenting, and all these conversations were part of the artwork. In this sense I would like to speak of an "aesthetics of communication" in Moscow Conceptualism. The focus was not on the completed work but on the process of presenting, discussing and commenting it. And it was here that video documentation gained its significance. Video as a medium makes it possible to preserve such artistic communication for further research.

OM: Is it true that the so-called "kitchen conversations" familiar from Soviet dissident culture of the 1960s were replaced in conceptualist circles by this form of discourse as part of the artwork?(In Soviet times, discussions regarding non-official art could result in repressions for the participants. This is why often such discussions took place in kitchens and other private places. Over time, the term "kitchen conversation" became an established way of referring to such discourse.)



SH: I would ascribe the tradition of kitchen conversations to the previous generation, where a conversation functioned purely as a conversation. In the milieu of conceptualism, conversation is a kind of performance that provokes more and more commentaries, interpretations, and theoretical speculations until they merge into the greater context of a documentary *Gesamtkunstwerk*. The conversations don't remain an ephemeral phenomenon but become instead part of the artistic process.



OM: Your wish to document these artistic underground gatherings came true when in 1984 you published, together with your colleague Georg Witte, the multimedia edition *Kulturpalast. New Moscow Poetry and Performance Art.*(Sascha Wonders, Günter Hirt, *Kulturpalast. Neue Moskauer Poesie und*

Aktionskunst. Mit Tonkassette und Karteikartensammlung (Wuppertal: Edition S-Press, 1984).) Why did you use the pseudonyms Günter Hirt and Sascha Wonders?

SH: The choice of pseudonyms emphasized a certain solidarity with the underground. But it was also in part self-defense, because we were publishing Russian texts from the unofficial culture abroad. Later, during the time of Perestrojka, when there was no more censorship, the use of a pseudonym developed its own dynamics and became like a play – our names functioned as a sort of trademark for our translation and editing practice.

OM: How did you choose your pseudonyms?

SH: We wanted to give our names an artificial tone: In Georg Witte's case "Günter Hirt", the first name appears to be drawn from German mythology, while the family name sounds more cosmopolitan. As for my own pseudonym, Sascha Wonders, you can't really guess which nationality or gender are hidden behind it. That led to the curious fact that letters to me were addressed like this: Dear Mr. Wonders.... Nobody actually assumed that there was a woman hidden behind it because in Russia "Sasha" is a name for both women and men! "Günther Anders" is a famous pseudonym in German writing. But you can also think of Stevie Wonder and pop music. I found this ambivalent pseudonym poetic (laughs). It was a byproduct of our translation activities and a reflection on official and unofficial culture, mainstream and underground.

OM: Can you say something about the specific format of *Kulturpalast. New Moscow Poetry and Performance Art*? Why did you choose such an unusual combination of media for your book?

SH: *Kulturpalast* contained a book, an audio cassette, a text object (a series of cards). The package was published by S-Press in Wuppertal. S-Press had already published a lot of acoustic poetry in different audio media in the West. And this was exactly the context in which we wanted to present the Russian conceptual poets. There were two reasons for doing that: first, we wanted to introduce these aesthetics not only into the context of Sovietology or Slavic Studies, but also into an international field of perception and reception; Second we were hoping that personal contacts between artists from the East and the West would become possible. Of course, we did not foresee that this contact would become possible so soon. In 1989, we were able to organize the German-Russian poetry festival "*Tut i tam – Hier und dort (Here and There)*" in Essen/Germany, Moscow, and Leningrad. On these occasions poets from various countries (Austria, the two Germanies, Switzerland, and the Soviet Union) met for the first time in person.

OM: What did the "similar within the dissimilar" look like?

SH: S-Press, though regarded as one of the most important sound edition houses of the postwar period, was a small independent publishing house. Although the editors (Michael Köhler, Nikolaus Einhorn, and Wolfgang Mohrhenn) published well-known authors like John Cage, members of Fluxus, the Vienna group etc., they had to take other jobs to make a living. The Moscow conceptualists were in a similar situation, they also had to earn money in other professions. The number of copies for our edition was also not very high; artists and poets existed at the margins... In a certain sense, S-Press reminds me of *samizdat* (self-published) publications in the Soviet Union. Only in this case we are not dealing with manuscripts and typescripts, but with audio cassettes.

OM: How is it that Western and Eastern concrete and visual poetry and concept art could develop in such similar ways even before there was direct contact between East and West?

SH: The poet Vsevolod Nekrasov writes that it was through the publication of translations of Western poems in the journal *Inostrannaja Literatura / Foreign Literatures* (1964) and in *Literaturnaja Gazeta* (1969) that he found out, for the first time, about Western concrete and visual poetry. He adds that already in the 1950s he had developed in his own work similar forms of poetry. We are dealing then with independent developments in East and West that nevertheless have similar historical motivations. But Western conceptual art was also already known very early on in the circles of Russian unofficial culture, namely through books, catalogues and journals

that Western travelers brought with them. Astonishingly, some of these publications were even accessible at the *Moscow Library of Foreign Literatures*. We also need to take into account what I have called the effect of the "similar within the dissimilar." Under the label "conceptualism," artists inside the Soviet Union were able to place themselves within an international art context. Forms of reflection on language, on the conditions of perception, and on the reception of art developed by Moscow conceptual artists differed considerably from their Western counterparts since they were based on specific Russian traditions. Also, Moscow conceptualism is not based on an abstract philosophy of language; instead there are many narrative elements, as well as the influence of apophatic theology, Zen-buddhism, and psychedelics.

OM: For the exchange between cultures and languages, translation is of particularly great significance. You and Georg Witte introduced many texts from Moscow conceptualism to the German public. Why was this important to you?

SH: For us, translation was part of our editing and research activities. We wanted to show that there were not only two different systems, but also mutual exchange between East and West. We were dealing with phenomena that were comparable to each other: concrete, visual poetry and concept art. Through translation we were able to open a horizon of comparison between these respective genres. As a personal experience, translation is also quite important, because you let the other text pass through yourself; you reproduce it, and by reproducing it you produce it in your own language. There is a special way of experiencing a text that is connected with the labor of translation.

OM: How did you feel when you translated so many different artists and poets that belonged to Moscow Conceptualism?

SH: It was not easy, but all the more exciting, to translate all these different ways of writing from minimalism to Soc-Art and thus to present an entire cultural milieu. Immersing myself in this wide range of writing practices fascinated me as a translator. Ilya Kabakov was a real challenge for us because he expressed his theoretical texts in the form of what in Russian is called *skaz*, a discourse that simulates oral communication between a narrator and a reader. (Ilya Kabakov, *SHEK Nr. 8, Bauman-Bezirk, Stadt Moskau* (Leipzig: Reclam 1994).) After having published anthologies of Moscow Conceptualism we started to prepare individual editions, for instance of Dmitry Prigov, Lev Rubinshtein, and Vsevolod Nekrasov. (Günter Hirt, Sascha Wonders, *Dmitri Prigow. Der Milizionär und die anderen. Gedichte und Alphabete. Nachdichtungen* (Leipzig: Reclam, 1992). Dmitri A. Prigow, *Fünzig Blutströpfchen in einem absorbierenden Milieu*. (Augsburg: Maro-Verlag, 1993). Lew Rubinstein, *Lesung aus der Kartothek* (München: Edition S-Press, 1995).) In the *Kulturpalast* publication, but also in other of our publications, the translated poems were printed in both Russian and German. Publishing poems in two languages still seems to me an important principle, since translations can only be an approximation to their original as they are also interpretations of that original.

OM: In your translations, were there any German or Western cultural or poetic patterns or traditions that you could use to facilitate access for the non-Russian reader?

SH: In the case of Lev Rubinshtein it was a cybernetic style that has analogies in the West, if we think for instance of the Stuttgart Group around Max Bense. Rubinshtein's early text series are artificial in a demonstrative manner. They seem to be self-generating programs beyond any concrete social reality. Much more difficult were the texts by Dmitry Prigov because in his traditionally rhymed and metric poems he plays with specific Soviet patterns such as the jargon of ideology, Soviet propaganda, names of activists, etc... In German such a poetic practice can easily appear anachronistic, unless one takes into account the Soviet background. We tried to preserve this effect of strangeness. That is why we didn't translate the title of Prigov's poem "Militieman" with the word *Polizist*, or "policeman". Nor did we transform the rhymed, metric verses into free verse. The main question is whether the Western reader can adequately comprehend this dimension of the text without being acquainted

with the Soviet background.

OM: I grew up in the Soviet Union and I know the Soviet cultural background. Prigov's texts have appeared to me as a kind of subversive psychoanalysis of *Homo Sovieticus*, yet I ask myself how a Western reader not immersed in the culture can possibly understand Prigov's artistic reflections on Soviet culture?

SH: Yes, I think it's Prigov who polarizes most, not only in the West, but also in Russia. I witnessed this several times. The knowledge of the Soviet background plays an important role. Among the literary public, there are those who perceive rhyme and metric form as a stylization. But there are also those who don't accept rhyme and meter, because they appear to them as anachronisms. Prigov's self-stylization as a militiaman is also disturbing to some. When the underground is associated in this manner with state power, to some people, this is even today regarded as breaking a taboo.

OM: What has been the main impulse for your continuous research activity over the years?

SH: Before I came to Moscow, I couldn't really imagine what life there would be like. My life in Moscow was characterized by moving between two very different worlds, official and unofficial, and by experiencing the different emotions—such as fear and hope—associated with these worlds. This existential experience probably was a major impulse for my interest.

OM: Your personal experience in the milieu of Moscow conceptualism led to your becoming a member of the Moscow-based artist group *Collective Actions*. Can you describe this shift from researcher to artist?

SH: My German Blaupunkt camera also had to do with this (laughs). We were very much fascinated by the fact that the rules of the art market didn't determine the relations in the underground milieu, since there were no commercial vendors or consumers of art in the Soviet Union. All the people involved took a more or less active part in the actions prepared by the group. Participation was its main characteristic. We liked this very much as an antidote to our experience in the West. In Western countries, so it seemed to us then, culture was dominated by consumerism. For *Collective Actions*, on the other hand, not consumption but participation was the main objective. The question, a question still virulent today, was how these fleeting artistic events could be passed on from one generation to another. Here, descriptive texts, narration, theoretical speculations, photos, diagrams etc. played an important role. At this point also, my Blaupunkt came in handy. The video documentation of *Collective Actions* started with my camera. My intensive documentation activities eventually turned into an artistic activity in its own right. This happened during performances from a later period, which reflected on the interaction between event and documentation on a meta-level. There was a fluid border between author and participant in the group, and on its participant lists at a certain point my name was placed at the beginning. This was an important general principle for the group: participants were acknowledged as authors when their idea for a performance was accepted and carried out by the others. Their name was then mentioned first at the beginning of the list.



OM: What had been your suggestion for an action?

SH: My contribution was a little series of performances in which video itself became a topic: *To Elena Elagina (Place of Recording)* and *To Sergei Romashko (Video)*. In this way, for the first time, I became an author of

Collective Actions. And this series of actions continued in Germany during the 1990s, when several Moscow conceptualists were invited to various festivals and exhibition projects throughout Europe. During the performance entitled *Link* (1990), which took place in the Botanical Garden at the Ruhr University in Bochum, materials from the computer game *The Legend of Zelda* were used, and in this way the reflection on media was extended to the relationship between reality and virtuality.

OM: The documentation was transformed into a poetic gesture. On another note, what was the reception of your publications in the West?

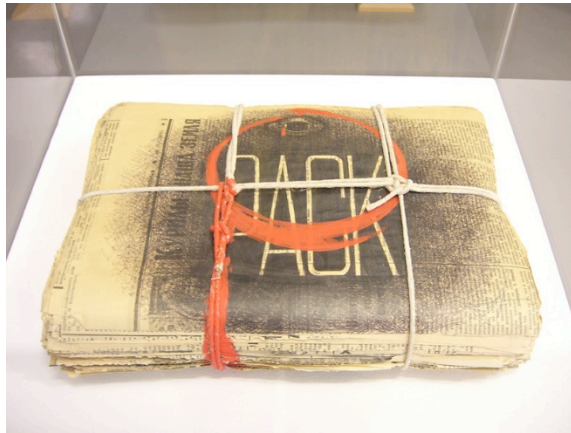
SH: In 1984, *Kulturpalast* created a little sensation because the poetic and artistic practices of the Moscow underground had never been presented so comprehensively.



M: Presently, you are the curator of the exhibition PRIGOV. The Text Works of Dmitry Aleksandrovich, which has been shown in Bremen, Graz, and which will also travel to Prague. What prompted you to organize this show?

SH: The show is the result of a long-lasting engagement with Prigov's work. Together with Georg Witte, I have been collecting Prigov's text-based works for many years. We wanted to exhibit them and present our research in concrete form to a broader public. In the last years quite a few Prigov exhibitions have been organized, for instance at the 54th Biennale in Venice, in the Hermitage in St. Petersburg, and at the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow. Our project is a small mobile exhibition that can be shown literally out of a suitcase, and thus be presented in very different contexts. It was shown for the first time at the Weserburg Museum in Bremen in 2010. With this new show my idea was to place Prigov in an international context. In the following year, in 2011, we presented Prigov in combination with a younger generation of artists in Graz.

OM: How does the "similar and the dissimilar" manifest itself in the relationship between generations?



SH: The conceptualists developed a strong artistic stance,

but it was not a direct political manifestation. It was rather a kind of self-reflection. The contemporary artistic generation is less concerned with reflection than with practices of social and political engagement. In the show in Graz Roman Grabner and I had contrasted Prigov with the Russian artist group *Chto delat*. For me this led to an interesting comparison, because there was a visual connection between the two, the newspaper. In Prigov's work, writing across the pages of a newspaper implies a reflection on political and ideological signs. For instance, he takes the Soviet party newspaper *Pravda* (The Truth) as background and overwrites the printed page with his own name, PRIGOV, while the newspaper text continues to remain legible through the letters of his name. Using *Pravda* as a ready-made, Prigov demonstrates the entanglement of official and unofficial cultures, as well as his own involvement in this complex situation. *Chto delat*, on the other hand, presented an installation using their own newspaper, a platform for genuine political discussion. Here, I see a real difference between generations: In Prigov's case, we are dealing with a kind of self-reflection concerning his involvement in the Soviet official discourse and political attitudes; in the case of the *Chto delat*, by contrast, we have a political newspaper addressing a broader public, a kind of direct political action.

OM: An "exhibition out of a suitcase" is an interesting way of presenting an artist's work....

SH: Well, yes, maybe it's a strength of our current show that Prigov's works are not shown in a historicizing way but on a mobile platform in always different contexts. I am already curious to see the exhibition in other places.

OM: The viewfinder on your Blaupunkt camera became part of the Russian underground. Is your camera also among the exhibits of this show?

SH: No, unfortunately the camera was somehow lost. But the recordings can be seen in the exhibition.

OM: Thank you.

Zürich, December 12th, 2012 and June 2015. (The authors wish to thank Monika Dittrich and Reinhold Schiffer for their help with the translation. A different version of this interview was published, in German, in <http://www.novinki.de/martin-olga-am-rande-im-verborgen-im-visier/> (Zürich 2013).)



Olga Martin is a doctoral candidate in Slavic studies at the University of Zurich. The subject of her dissertation is the militiaman in Soviet and Postsoviet art and culture. After completing her Master's thesis at the University of Bonn she was a lecturer at Charles University in Prague, where she also wrote articles

for Radio Prague and for various journals.